

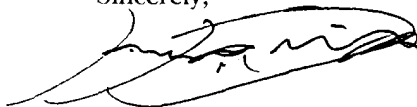
EXHIBIT 16

To Whom It May Concern:

While working as a server and bartender at the Papermoon Restaurant in Erie, PA, I recently became reacquainted with my former Spanish and Homeroom teacher at Meadville Area Junior and Senior Highschool, Ms. Claudette DeLeon. When I asked her about life in and outside the classroom, she informed me that her position at Crawford Central had been terminated due to questionable circumstances concerning what had been described by several students and administration alike as her incompetence as an educator in the state of Pennsylvania. Immediately after learning of this unfortunate development, I became rather agitated. As a 24 year old professional who returned to Pennsylvania to pursue as Master of the Arts in Middle and Secondary Education, it disturbed me that the vibrant highschool rumormill could so adversely affect the employment of a good teacher.

In my classroom experiences with Ms. DeLeon, I knew her to be nothing but professional. My questions were always quickly and thoughtfully addressed, my assignments were always submitted and returned in a timely manner, and my exemplary marks in her class, without fail, accurately reflected my steadfast effort, hard work, and desire to learn. Despite my positive experiences in the classroom with Ms. DeLeon, several students, the names of which have since left my memory, routinely abused the instructor's kindness. This behavior which was reflected both in the form of classroom disobedience and in the extracurricular creation and dissemination of outlandish rumors. Toward the end of my highschool career, I vividly remember discussion between several students of Claudette's preemptory termination. That the mere spite of children might, in any way, to any extent, or in any capacity, lead to the unfair termination of a professional gives me serious pause; indeed, in some respect, it has led me to question my future career as an English teacher.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jonathan James Smith', with a stylized flourish extending from the end.

Jonathan James Smith

Assn 10

April 10, 1996

TO: M.A.S.H. Administration
FROM: Mrs. Mitchell's Spanish V Students
SUBJ: Accusations against Mrs. Mitchell

We, the students of Mrs. Mitchell's Spanish V class, have recently become aware that Mrs. Mitchell's job may be in jeopardy due to various allegations made by the MASH administration. We do not know the exact nature of all of these accusations, but feel that such an attack is unwarranted and unfair.

We feel that Mrs. Mitchell has been an excellent teacher. We have learned far more in our two or three years with her than with any other teacher we have had. Sometimes we surprise ourselves with our knowledge of the Spanish language. For instance, an exchange student from Argentina recently visited our class. He spoke very quickly, in fluent Spanish, of course. While we were amazed at first, we soon discovered that we understood nearly everything he said, and were able to ask questions of our own. This certainly would not be possible under the instruction of an incompetent teacher.

It has also come to our attention that Mrs. Mitchell is being criticized for the manner in which her students arrive to class. Again, this reproach is highly unjustified. Early in the year, Mrs. Mitchell was ordered by the administration to lock the door of her outdoor classroom. Because Mrs. Mitchell must travel a long distance to reach our class for fifth period, it became obvious that we would occasionally need to wait for her to arrive. To prevent us from shivering in the cold outside the classroom, Mrs. Mitchell told us to wait in the Gym Lobby for her to arrive, so that we might walk to the room together. At times, we have sent one student to check the door to see if it is locked. However, we do not stand around in the cold and rain if the room is indeed closed. We are not sheep; we are smart enough to move to a warmer location. In any event, concern for the well-being of her students forced Mrs. Mitchell to allow the late arrival of some of her students. If caring and compassion are now reasons for dismissal, then what is that saying about the state of education at MASH? Has the administration nothing better to do than stare out the window and persecute teachers?

Actually, only one teacher's job is at stake here, which is all the more mystifying. The teachers of other outdoor classrooms routinely allow their students to leave class several minutes before the bell. Have they been warned of their infraction as well? If so, is action being taken to correct the "problem," as is being done with Mrs. Mitchell? If not, it seems discrimination may be at work here in Meadville.

Many educators now advocate Outcome Based Education as the superior means of teaching. Since we as students demonstrate extensive knowledge of the subject we are being taught, then we are the essence of OBE and Mrs. Mitchell is an exemplary teacher, regardless of her methods.

In short, the students of Mrs. Mitchell's Spanish classes believe that the allegations of misconduct being directed at her ~~are completely unmerited and unjust~~ and the matter should be dropped entirely.

Gregory Kline

Michelle Smith

Jocelyn Kline

Kris Shelby

Jack Scott

Matthew E. Mariano

PENNSYLVANIA HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

WITNESS STATEMENT

DOCKET NO. _____

CLAUDETTE DE LEON
ComplainantCRAWFORD CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
Respondent

The essential matter of this complaint is that the complainant alleges that the respondent discriminated against the complainant as regards:

The respondent denies the complainant was treated differently than others.

PLEASE COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING

YOUR NAME MRS. SALLY L. STANFORD ADDRESS 487 JACKSON PARK DRIVE MEADVILLE, PA 16335 PHONE 814-337-0859

The complainant CLAUDETTE DE LEON WAS ☒ WAS NOT ☐ treated differently than others by the respondent CRAWFORD CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT because of the complainant's _____.

I attest that the following is true and correct and to the best of my knowledge as to the WHEN, WHERE, HOW, and WHY this difference in treatment did or did not occur. (Your Statement follows)

HAVING OVERRUN (WON THE GRIEVANCE) THE UNSATISFACTORY EVALUATIONS GIVEN HER IN THE PAST. THE DISTRICT DOES NOT SEEM TO ACCEPT THE FACT THAT SHE IS ULTRA ORGANIZED AND IS AN EXCELLENT TEACHER. ~~CLAUDETTE DE LEON~~
CLAUDETTE HAS BEEN CHASTISED FOR DOING SOMETHING (OR NOT) WHILE EVEN MYSELF (A FELLOW TEACHER) HAS NOT BEEN CHASTISED IN THE SAME MANNER FOR THE SAME THING.

PENNSYLVANIA HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

WITNESS STATEMENT

CLAUDETTE DILGON

Complainant

DOCKET NO. _____

CRAWFORD CENTRAL SCHOOL DIST
Respondent

The essential matter of this complaint is that the complainant alleges that the respondent discriminated against the complainant as regards:

The respondent denies the complainant was treated differently than others.

PLEASE COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING

487 JACKSON PARK DRIVE

YOUR NAME John H Stanford ADDRESS MAADVILLE, PA 16335 PHONE 814-337-0859

The complainant CLAUDETTE DELANAS WAS ☒ WAS NOT ☐ treated differently than others by the respondent Crawford Central School District because of the complainant's ____.

I attest that the following is true and correct and to the best of my knowledge as to the WHEN, WHERE, HOW, and WHY this difference in treatment did or did not occur. (Your Statement follows)

I feel that Claudette is an excellent teacher both in discipline, and subject matter. She has been singled out in many situations that others have not been. She has been facing many rumors and accusations that have made problems in the classroom and out. Most are not justified.

~~AFTER TEACHING AT LEAST FIVE YEARS WITHOUT A SINGLE PROBLEM SHE WAS ASKING FOR A POSITION AT A HIGHER SCHOOL. SHE STARTED TEACHING AT THE NEW SCHOOL BUT THE DISTRICT HAD NO MORE POSITIONS AVAILABLE.~~

Date: June 19, 2006

To Whom It May Concern,

I recently was asked by Mrs. Claudette de Leon (Formerly Mitchell) to write a letter on her behalf. Mrs. de Leon informed me that She had been fired from Meadville High School. How could this had happened? She was the Best Spanish teacher I had. She taught me real "Spanish." I knew a little bit of Spanish because my mom Speaks Spanish. My mom is from Puerto Rico.

Mrs. de Leon was a great teacher. She was nice to all the students. She knew how to discipline. She was polite to everybody. I loved her class. She always gave me back my assignments on a timely manner. I never had a problem with Mrs. de Leon loosing any of my assignments or anybody else. As far as I am concern, of all the teachers I had through out my High school years. Mrs. de Leon was the most educated, professional and knowledgable teacher.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rick L. Myers".

Richard Myers
Phone # 814-382-1959

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Erin Battles and I am a former student of Claudette DeLeon. I was asked to speak for her and to discuss how she conducted her class and what was taught. However, during this time in which I was invited to speak for her, I will be attending college and will not be able to do so. Instead, I am writing this letter and will explain my feelings toward Ms. Claudette DeLeon.

During the school year of 2000-2001, I had Spanish III, which was taught by Ms. DeLeon, for my 7th period class. This class included students from grades 9th-12th. Ms. DeLeon was in fact a good teacher. She was always willing to help students if they were struggling with the new language, even if it meant staying after school to help them. However, it was up to the student to put in the extra time and patience to do so. In my experiences of taking language courses, if students found it too hard to learn they often blew it off by being lazy and not trying. In no way is it the teachers' fault if the students refuse to help themselves. In cases like this, when the student begins to receive bad grades, the student often blames it on the teacher. Parents also do not like to see their children receive bad grades and rather than blaming their children for not studying or for not trying hard enough, they often believe their child when he or she says how bad the teacher is. This is where phone calls begin from parents calling the school and also where rumors get started about a teacher not teaching well.

Ms. DeLeon would often times try to make the class more interesting by assigning group projects. I remember doing a project that

consisted of researching a Spanish speaking country. We were allowed to prepare a food and serve it to the class, bring in pictures of places within the country, and/or bring in objects from the country. The most important part of this project was that our report had to be read in Spanish to the class. If you chose not to do this project, then you had to write a lengthy essay.

Ms. DeLeon also taught by assigning pages in the book to do, giving us worksheets, and taking notes off of either the board or the overhead projector. She would often give us quizzes weekly to see what we were learning and would go over the quizzes to see where students made mistakes and to help them if they were confused. We kept all worksheets, handouts, quizzes and tests in our organized binders that were also graded. We used these to review past information and to study with for our final at the end of the year.

Ms. DeLeon only wanted the best for her students and yet if possible, students walked all over her and took advantage of her kindness. Such things being getting a second chance on a late homework assignment or an extra day to study for a test because the class felt they weren't ready. However, the moment Ms. DeLeon said no to a student, problems began because the student didn't get what they wanted and therefore turned the issue into more than what it should have been because of their exaggeration. Of course, this causes parents to call and a student to tell other teachers and even principles how "bad" the teacher is.

Being a student looking back on my class days with Ms. DeLeon, I realize what a good teacher she was and how much I learned. I will be majoring

in International Business at school and for that, I have to speak Spanish. I was a bit nervous at first, but I have been reviewing and I'm surprised how much I remember and learned from just that year of having her. I know I gave her a few problems throughout the year because I thought the class was too hard. Luckily, she never gave up on me and for that, I learned a lot that will now further me through my college education.

It's sad to see such a good teacher going through such hard times to get her job back. I'm unsure of why she lost her job, there are other teachers in the Meadville High School that students also take advantage of. I'm guessing the difference is that those teachers don't get reported or have rumors spread around about them because in all reality, those teachers just have easier classes and students are passing because the work is also easier.

You learn subjects such as Math and English from Elementary school until you graduate high school or college. A foreign language, however, isn't taught until middle school. This causes it to be harder to learn. And to learn a completely new language with speaking, spelling and writing in the language properly takes a good teacher. I know for a fact that Ms. DeLeon is a perfect person to do this. Not only does she speak this language fluent, but it's also her nationality! Being a former student of hers, I can honestly say that I learned a lot in her class and that she was a good teacher.

I hope this letter helps in some way. I'm sorry I will be unable to tell you this in person; however, if you have any questions you can write me back at:

Erin Battles
21530 Auburn Ave.
Meadville, Pa 16335

Or try my home number at (814) 337-7523. Thank you for taking the time to read this.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Erin M. Battles". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Erin M. Battles

Jan 22, 1996

Mrs Mitchell,

Wanted to write you a
note and tell you how
exciting it is for Eric to be
taking your Spanish Class.

This is his very first
regular ed class and I'm
sure it is an adjustment
for him learning appropriate
behavior and simply the
process of learning in a regular
classroom. You have not only
held his interest but have
kept him excited about coming
to class & learning new material.
Not only is he learning a
skill that I'm sure he will
use all his life but he is
building confidence.

Sincerely,
Linda Osborne